

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing assistance to an agent in a communication system, comprising the steps of:
 - determining skills of each agent of a plurality of agents;
 - storing the determined skills for respective agents of the plurality of agents as skill records in a database;
 - retrieving, when a predetermined agent of the plurality of agents requests to communicate with another of the agents of the plurality of agents, the skill record of the predetermined agent from the database;
 - comparing the skill record of the predetermined agent to the skill records of the other agents in the database;
 - selecting an agent from the plurality of agents based on the comparison of skill records; and
 - establishing communication between the predetermined agent and the selected agent.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the determined skills for agents are stored in skill records in a database.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein each of the skill records contains at least an agent identifier and at least one associated skill classification.
4. The method according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of skill sets are predetermined, and wherein the method further comprises associating at least one skill set with a respective agent of the plurality of agents, the at least one skill set being identified based on the determined skills of the respective agent.
5. The method according to claim 4, wherein an identification of the respective agent, and the association of the respective agent and the at least one skill set are stored in skill records in a database.

6. A method for a chat function in an automatic call distribution system, comprising the steps of:
 - determining skills of each agent of a plurality of agents;
 - receiving a request from a predetermined person for communication with one of the agents of the plurality of agents;
 - determining skills of the predetermined person;
 - comparing the skills the predetermined person to the skills of the agents;
 - selecting an agent from the plurality of agents based on the comparison of skills; and
 - establishing communication between the predetermined person and the selected agent.
7. The method according to claim 6, wherein the predetermined person is one of the agents of the plurality of agents.
8. The method according to claim 6, wherein the predetermined person is an agent that is remote from the plurality of agents.
9. The method according to claim 6, wherein the determined skills for agents are stored in skill records in a database.
10. The method according to claim 9, wherein each of the skill records contains at least an agent identifier and at least one associated skill classification.
11. The method according to claim 6, wherein a plurality of skill sets are predetermined, and wherein the method further comprises associating at least one skill set with a respective agent of the plurality of agents, the at least one skill set being identified based on the determined skills of the respective agent.
12. The method according to claim 11, wherein identification of the respective agent, and the association of the respective agent and the at least one skill set are stored in skill records in a database.

13. A method for providing a chat function in an automatic call distribution system, comprising the steps of:
 - determining skills of each agent of a plurality of agents in the automatic call distribution system;
 - grouping the agents according to skills thereof into a plurality of skill groups; and
 - providing chat sessions between agents in a respective skill group of the plurality of skill groups.
14. The method according to claim 13, wherein the determined skills for agents are stored in skill records in a database.
15. The method according to claim 14, wherein each of the skill records contains at least an agent identifier and at least one associated skill classification.
16. The method according to claim 13, wherein a plurality of skill sets are predetermined, and wherein the method further comprises associating at least one skill set with a respective agent of the plurality of agents, the at least one skill set being identified based on the determined skills of the respective agent.
17. The method according to claim 16, wherein identification of the respective agent, and the association of the respective agent and the at least one skill set are stored in skill records in a database.
18. A computer program product embedded in a computer readable medium for use in providing assistance to an agent in an automatic call distribution system, comprising:
 - a computer readable media containing code segments comprising:
 - a skill determining computer program code segment that determines skills of each agent of a plurality of agents;
 - a storing computer program code segment that stores the determined skills for respective agents of the plurality of agents as skill records in a database;

a skill record retrieving computer program code segment that, when a predetermined agent of the plurality of agents requests to communicate with another of the agents of the plurality of agents, retrieves the skill record of the predetermined agent from the database;

a skill record comparing computer program code segment that compares the skill record of the predetermined agent to the skill records of the other agents in the database;

an agent selecting computer program code segment that selects an agent from the plurality of agents based on the comparison of skill records; and

a communication establishing computer program code segment that establishes communication between the predetermined agent and the selected agent.

19. A computer program product embedded in a computer readable medium for use in providing assistance to an agent in an automatic call distribution system, comprising:

a computer readable media containing code segments comprising:

a skill record retrieving computer program code segment that, when a respective agent of a plurality of agents requests to communicate with another of the agents of the plurality of agents, retrieves a skill record of the respective agent from a database;

a skill record comparing computer program code segment that compares the skill record of the predetermined agent to the skill records of the other agents in the database;

an agent selecting computer program code segment that selects an agent from the plurality of agents based on the comparison of skill records; and

a communication establishing computer program code segment that establishes communication between the predetermined agent and the selected agent.

20. An apparatus for providing a chat function in an automatic call distribution system, comprising:

means for determining skills of each agent of a plurality of agents in the automatic call distribution system;

means for grouping the agents according to skills thereof into a plurality of skill groups; and

means for providing chat sessions between agents in a respective skill group of the plurality of skill groups.

21. The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the determined skills for agents are stored in skill records in a database.
22. The apparatus according to claim 21, wherein each of the skill records contains at least an agent identifier and at least one associated skill classification.
23. The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein a plurality of skill sets are predetermined, and wherein at least one skill set is associated with a respective agent of the plurality of agents, the at least one skill set being based on the determined skills of the respective agent.
24. The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein identification of the respective agent, and the association of the respective agent and the at least one skill set are stored in skill records in a database.
25. An apparatus that provides assistance to an agent in a communication system, comprising:
 - means for determining skills of each agent of a plurality of agents;
 - means for storing the determined skills for respective agents of the plurality of agents as skill records in a database;
 - means for retrieving, when a predetermined agent of the plurality of agents requests to communicate with another of the agents of the plurality of agents, the skill record of the predetermined agent from the database;
 - means for comparing the skill record of the predetermined agent to the skill records of the other agents in the database;
 - means for selecting an agent from the plurality of agents based on the comparison of skill records; and
 - means for establishing communication between the predetermined agent and the selected agent.

26. The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the determined skills for agents are stored in skill records in a database.
27. The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein each of the skill records contains at least an agent identifier and at least one associated skill classification.
28. The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein a plurality of skill sets are predetermined, and wherein at least one skill set is associated with a respective agent of the plurality of agents, the at least one skill set being based on the determined skills of the respective agent.
29. The apparatus according to claim 28, wherein identification of the respective agent, and the association of the respective agent and the at least one skill set are stored in skill records in a database.
30. An apparatus that provides assistance to an agent of a plurality of agents in an automatic call distribution system, comprising:
 - a skill determination module that determines skills of each agent of the plurality of agents;
 - a database in which is stored as skill records the determined skills for respective agents of the plurality of agents, the database being operatively connected to the skill determination module;
 - a retrieving module operatively connected to the database that, when a predetermined agent of the plurality of agents requests to communicate with another of the agents of the plurality of agents, retrieves the skill record of the predetermined agent from the database;
 - a comparator having inputs for the skill record of the predetermined agent and the skill records of the other agents in the database, the comparator outputting comparisons of the skill records of the predetermined agent and the other agents;
 - a selector that receives the output of the comparator and in response thereto selects an agent from the plurality of agents based on the comparison of skill records; and

a connection module that establishes communication between the predetermined agent and the selected agent.

31. The apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the determined skills for agents are stored in skill records in a database.
32. The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein each of the skill records contains at least an agent identifier and at least one associated skill classification.
33. The apparatus according to claim 30, wherein a plurality of skill sets are predetermined, and wherein at least one skill set is associated with a respective agent of the plurality of agents, the at least one skill set being based on the determined skills of the respective agent.
34. The apparatus according to claim 33, wherein identification of the respective agent, and the association of the respective agent and the at least one skill set are stored in skill records in a database.